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LETTERS FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE
TO HON. HENRY LAURENS, 1777-1780.

(Continued from the April number.)

[33]

Addressed: private letter

to
The honorable henry
Laurens Esq
at
York town

Camp Valley forge 26 april 1778

dear Sir

I have only the time of writing two lines by ms de francy, and I hope I'll find soon one other occasion of troubling you with a letter of mine—this will only speack of a monney business I have with you—do you remember that you have advanced to me a pretty large sum of money at *four for one*—as ms de francy and myself have just now made a convection upon a large scale, and ms moriss has agreed to my returning that part of the monney advanced to me whose bills of exchange were not sent yet, I thought you would not have any objec-

tion were those 6000 dollars returned by him at such conditions as will be deemed proper—however if there was the least difficulty I schall immediately send you bills of exchange upon france—if I make an improper proposition I beg you would excuse my entire ignorance and stupidity in that kind of business

I have at least found some receipts of a part of the monney advanced by me for public service—be so good as to sent it where I am to be pay'd—every thing I have given was of an indispensable necessity, and decency as well as public honor has obliged me to make sometimes the duty of pay-master.

with the most sincere affection and highest regard I have the honor to be

dear Sir

Your most obedient servant
the M^{is} de Lafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette

26 April 1778

Ans^d. 3 May—

[34]

Valley forge camp the 1st May 1778

houra, my good friend, now the affair is over, and a very good treaty will assure our noble independence—very happy I find myself to see things so well brought to the common glory and satisfaction—*france* I am told has behaved with frankness and generosity—every circumstance affords me the Greatest pleasure—I hope we schall receive an authentic intelligence from Congress, and every one in the army ardently expects to hear the signal from them, that they may abandon themselves to the solemn expressions and acclamations of theyr happiness—I hope a grand, noisy *feu de joy* will be ordered, it will give high spirits to our soldiers, it will run through

the whole continent, it shall reach the ears of our good friends in philadelphia—I wish'd Ms^s Commissioners may arrive from england that very same day, where we shall let them know that we have discovered theyr jesuistical meanings, and *the Candor* of theyr propositions—I must confess, my dear sir, that I have also felt the greatest satisfaction in hearing what justice and respect is payd in europe to my respectable friend our commander in chief.

I expect with the greatest impatience the arrival of Ms *Simeon deane* at camp—that gentleman I hope will bring me a large parcel of european intelligences—tho' I have not yet got the answer to my last letter, I think this is for me the occasion of writing to Congress—the man who left france when the news of Gnl Washington being with sixteen hundred men this side of the delaware had reached europe, and before this of trenton was Arrived, this man, says I, must be in fine spirits to see how far things have been from that time for the happiness of mankind, the prosperity of freedom, and the Glory of what they call in france my *new country—America*.

let me now speack to you of less important matters; I have some baggage at york and as I am much averse to carrying many in camp, I have entertained the hope that Ms Laurens would have no objection that those few trunks be carried into his house—when Congress will set out for philadelphia I beg you would have them brought among your own, and when I'll set out for france I'll come to take them and very heartily thank you for your good Care—do you think, my dear sir, there will be no inconvenience in that proposition of mine.

with a great impatience I also expect a letter concerning C¹⁰¹ Armand, and am inclined to believe that Congress wo'nt refuse his request—we have a painter in Camp who is desirous of drawing General Washington—but

his excellency do'nt choose to give much time to it—do'nt you think, sir, that Congress schould ask that picture from him in order to have it fixed in the house as a monument of theyr gratefulness—my idea is a pretty interested one as I want to have a copy of that projected picture.

farewell, my dear sir, be so good as to let me know which effects such a good news has produced at york, and believe me with the greatest affection and highest regard

dear Sir Your most obedient
humble servant

the M^{is} deLafayette

I wish G^{nl} Gates would be sent here without loss of time, and also the committee—if you see Gnl lee tell him that I ardently wish the pleasure of his acquaintance. very heartily I desire that M^s Capitain be soon given up to me.

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette

1 May 1778 Rec^d: 3^d—

[35]

Addressed: to the honorable
the president of the Congress of the United
States of America
at
York town

Valley forge Camp the 5th May 1778

dear Sir

I have the honor to send you the copies of letters Concerning Ms de la neuville, which I understand did not get to Congress in the time they had been delivered by his excellency General Washington—Monsieur de la Neuville will be looked on by any one who is acquainted with him as a very deserving Gentleman on every re-

spect, and I hope he will be agreeable to Congress—I should be very happy, sir, was he employed according to his wishes, and am convinced his services may prove useful as he brings recommendations, and marks of esteem from two men of a distinguished merit and reputation in France, the *baron de Wurmser* a German lieutenant Genl in our Service and the *M^{rs} de Bouille* governor of Martinico.

there is one other affair I am obliged to trouble Congress with—the chevalier de Fayolles who came with me from France, whose services were not accepted, was prevented by his health to return home as soon as he had wished—he writes me to know if he could be employed in the same rank which he has the commission in France Lt Colonel; if not, as he runs the disagreeable risk of being taken in his return he should take as very particular favor to obtain some protection for being received in the continental frigate *La varrena* now in Boston.

As I am going to send an express to Lt. Col^l Gouville of the engineers who is among the Indians, in case, sir, you think it can do some good as coming from a Frenchman, I beg you would send me many exemplaires of that Sketch of our happy treaty I have received, that I may forward them to our Indian neighbours and by them to the nations living in Canada.

With the highest Regard I have the honor to be, Sir,
 Your most obedient servant
 the M^{rs} de Lafayette

Endorsed: Marquis de Lafayette
 5 May 1778
 Recd. y^e 9th—
 Ans^d. 11th—

[36]

Addressed: private
to the honorable henry Laurens esq.
at
York town

Valley forge Camp 10th may 1778

dear Sir

the bearer of this letter is mons. de Lomagne whom Congress has made a captain at my reccommandation and who is now with colonel Armand—his colonel sent him in a great hurry as he is himself very impatient to hear from me about his business—but you know, my dear sir, that far from forgetting them I have applied warmly to Congress and begg'd several times an answer in his favor—I hope it will be brought to me by Ms de gimat, or at least by the bearer of the present—Armand will have a corps of four hundred good men, french or germains, not one english desertor, and it is conspicuous that by not taking any american he do'nt hurt the recruiting or drafting service—he has expended good deal from his own pocquet, and Ms de Lomagne will repeat yet to you his wishes, which I warmly desire Congress may comply to, as they seem very just ones.

Mons. de Lomagne wants to be a major—that I do'nt believe Congress will do but have promised to write you on the subject—I never saw him in france, but he seems a very well bred man and has a certificate from a gentleman I am much acquainted with the *duke du chatelet*. I can not refuse those two words of reccommandation to you.

whenever I speack you *freely* in any reccommandations it is between us, unless you may think proper to mention in General words my sentiments to Congress—I beg you would reccommend to them particularly the affair of C¹⁰¹ Armand and this I am going to speack upon.

Gnl gates has lately wrote to Congress for C^{l^{ol}} failly and Ms deLuce, and asked new commissions—I wish *failly* may be promoted, and gnl gates as told me that he was sure Congress would grant to that officer the rank of Colonel—be so good as to let me know if you think it may be done.

by a french gentleman just from philadelphia I hear that the current noise there is that a *pacquet boat* has brought the news of a war declared between france and england and hostilities already begun.

As Gnl washington had expressed when I was at al-bany the desire of getting indians, I had try'd every exertion to procure them, and I hear fifty will arrive in camp to day or to morrow under a french officer I had sent to them and for whom I'll trouble Congress after the affair of failly will be fixed upon in one way or other

Very affectionately I have the honor to be

My dear Sir

Your most obedient servant
the M^{is} de Lafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette

10 May Rec^d. 11th.

1778—

[37]

Valley forge Camp 14th may 1778

dear Sir

I have just now receiv'd your favor by C^{l^{ol}} gimat and instantly beg you would offer to the Consideration of Congress the affair of C^{l^{ol}} Armand—that gentleman has incurr'd great expenses from his own for to raise an independant Corps—he flatters himself he could bring into the field before long 400 good men, was he entitled by an order of Congress to enlist hessian desertors or prisonners—he has already inlisted a great number of

frenchmen and will not take one english desertor—he wish'd that his old corps be given back to him, and that he may be annexed to some state in order to get the bounty by inlisted man—but, sir, I have explained that matter very fully in a letter wrote three weeks ago, and will only confine myself in telling that ardently I wish to send soon good news to that gentleman; as he is exposed every day to an immense deal of expenses by his zeal and impatience of being soon in the field.

may I beg in this letter the gentlemen of Congress who have done with french papers to be so good as to deliver some to you for me—it is almost the only way of satisfying my curiosity for every thing which has happened since some time in my most beloved country.

I beg you would transmit to me the account of the affairs I took the liberty of recommending to you when decided by Congress in behalf of french gentlemen—theyr confidence deserved my exertions, and the pleasure of being useful to my countrymen is one of the greatest I may feel.

I hope the Gentlemen of Congress have not been displeased with the letter of my uncle the M^{is} de noailles to his brittanick majesty, and the effects it has produced—with the highest regard I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant
the M^{is} de Lafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette

14 May 1778 Rec^d. 16th—

Ans^d. 17th—

[38]

Valley forge Camp 25th may 1778

dear Sir

I have the honor to send you a paquet for Congress which I beg you would examine and afterwards commu-

licate to them—this scheme calculated upon some ideas of mine seem to me of an high moment for the united states—if you was affraid that a too great publicity could ruin the project you could ask a committee—I expect from you a speedy answer—do’nt you think that if the king agrees to it, the scheme could be very advantageous to your country on every respect—I wish I could speack with you, but it is impossible—if a committee is directed to take farther imformations with me, I beg them to consider that honor forbids my leaving Camp by this time.

I make you my warmest thanks to have projenited a son like yours whose compagny and friendship is so agreable to me in camp, whose activity, zeal, intelligence and military knowledge have been so useful to me in the field during our detachment, and tho’ you di’nt think much of me when you did get him, I however aknowledge myself under great obligations to you for that so well performed work of yours.

if it is the same for you, sir, to receive the monney I am indebted for at charlestown from M^s Crips who has good deal of paper to me, and must have receiv’d from france an order for to dispose of it, I schall be obliged to you to send me a state of our accounts when you’ll have time—I beg your pardon to trouble you about my private business but to make bills of exchange upon france in gold, or upon M^s crips in paper, or to make a bill with interest for such a time, I must now my debts and your intentions

with the warmest friendship and highest regard I have the honor to be dear sir

Your most obedient servant
the M^s de Lafayette

Endorsed: Marquis delafayette
25 May 1778—

[*To be continued in the next number of this magazine.*]